

# THE BUMBLE BEE



Vol. 3, No. 1

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Columbia River Packers Association, Inc., Astoria, Oregon



# EDITORIAL

## Storms Ahead

That the commercial fishing industry, along with many other businesses of the nation will encounter rough seas during 1947, is obvious. The transition from a war time economy of high prices and scarcity to a peace time economy of plenty with prices again on a competitive basis, began in the closing weeks of 1946 and was speeding up as the calendar was turned.

The impact of such an economic transition traditionally makes itself felt, first at producer levels and then sweeps up the marketing scale, generally to expend itself with another back slap at the producer.

It is certain that if the industry is to avoid the extreme difficulties of former economic spasms, that it must proceed slowly and cautiously. Future commitments must be carefully examined and operations advanced carefully until it can be definitely ascertained that stabilization is at hand.

It is our belief that this transition period can be survived without major disaster if ALL the factors in the industry will realize that wages, profits, and prices are where they are, because of the stimulus of the wanton waste and recklessness of a war inspired economy.

No one element in this, or any other industry, can make all the sacrifices necessary for successful progress through this transition period. All must make proportionate sacrifices. The attempt of any group or factor to hold blindly to war time gains, in the face of inevitable return of a peace time economy may lead to total disaster.

## S. S. Pacific Explorer

The fishing industry of the Northwest should be vitally interested in the success of the venture of the Pacific Explorer. This fishing fleet mother ship equipped by government funds and operated by Nick Bez, may be the forerunner of a large fleet of similarly equipped vessels which will ply the vast reaches of the Pacific and contiguous oceans, bringing the fishy treasures of the sea to this area for processing.

Fish canning and processing plants,

existing in the Northwest and Alaska, represent investments of millions of dollars. Surrounding them are populations trained in the work necessary in such plants. Today these plants are operated only to a fraction of their capacity because of the sharply seasonal supply of raw material, and the labor they use, suffers because of the brief period of employment offered. With a fleet of such ships as the SS Pacific Explorer on the Pacific this condition might well be remedied and the plants placed on a year-around operating basis. Labor would have year-around employment.

Japan built up a great fishing industry on such a basis. Our Pacific Northwest fishing industry to date has relied on that portion of the fish runs which have appeared contiguous to our coasts, and that short production has suffered from time to time when, owing to vagaries of nature, that supply did not appear. With a fleet of well equipped mother ships ready to sail the areas of the Pacific where valuable fish species are known to exist, this dependence upon a variable local supply would be ended. We certainly can do what the Japanese industry did and if this American venture succeeds we will owe much to those who sponsored it.

## Dam Foolishness

Nothing is more disgusting than the mealy mouthed hypocrisy of the Columbia River dam advocates who prate about building the dams and saving the Columbia's great Chinook salmon runs in the same breath. They talk about forty, fifty, a hundred dams on the Columbia and its great tributary the Snake River. Such a project would leave the Columbia River a long series of semi-stagnant, warm pools, through which no salmon could live to make its way to spawning waters. Not all the fish ladders, all the fish elevators, or all the hatcheries, ever conceived could keep the salmon runs on such a river. Fortunately there are clearer and more unprejudiced minds which vision the day when the needs for cheap power will be met by the harnessed atom. They see the facts that point toward man's mastery of the atom within a decade. The

## ASSISTANT SALES MANAGER



John McGowan

A member of a pioneer family in the Columbia River fishing industry and himself trained in the business from earliest youth, John McGowan was recently appointed by CRPA management to assist Sales Manager Fred Sandoz in handling the many details of CRPA's rapidly expanding business.

dam building era is nearing its end. We hope the fanatical dam advocates will be forced to give up before they fill the river with useless dams and destroy entirely the finest run of salmon that ever existed.

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STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER...Ned Thorndike



# BIG CREEK HATCHERY PROGRAM ADVANCED

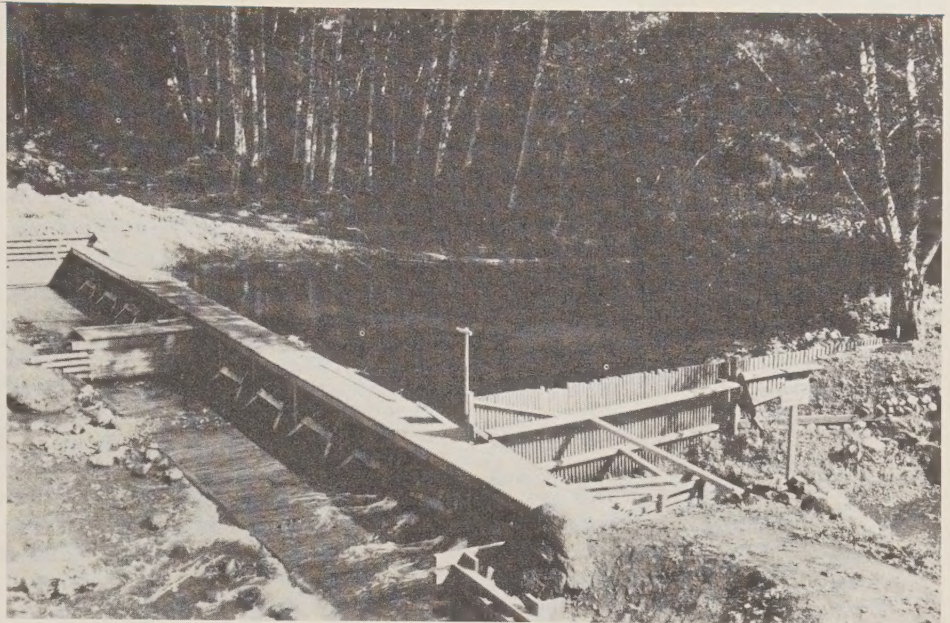
## Water Conditions Ideal for Salmon Crop Is Statement

One of the finest fisheries stations in this, or any other state, from the standpoint of satisfactory conditions for the artificial propagation of salmon is in the process of development by the Oregon Fish Commission, on Big Creek, some 20 miles up the Columbia River from Astoria, according to Irvine French, Director of Fish Culture. Experimental development at the station has already indicated its possibilities. While far from complete as yet, operations there have already quadrupled the number of silverside salmon entering this tributary.

"The water conditions, in their present state, are excellent and the stream itself maintains a temperature rate throughout the year which is very satisfactory for the production of rapid growing and healthy salmon fingerlings," French says. "In addition there is an ample supply of first grade water which is not always available. There is also available, and in use, for hatching house purposes a sufficient supply of spring water having a constant temperature of 47 degrees. As a result the size and quality of the fingerlings raised at this station, has been outstanding."

Present plans for expansion at the station call for a minimum of 15 cubic

## BIG CREEK SPAWNING RACKS



Here the mature salmon, drawn by the homing instinct to the stream of their nativity, quietly await Nature's process of readying them for the final event of their lives, reproduction of the species.

## FEEDING FINGERLINGS



## CHINOOK FINGERLINGS



Seining fall Chinook fingerlings at the Big Creek Hatchery.

second feet of water. Included in the new development plans are 30 semi-circular ponds, 80 by 20 feet, with 27 inch concrete sides and concrete bottoms; a new hatching house 80 by 40 feet, containing 50 troughs, and 10 tanks; a cold storage plant; a food house; and a garage. When maximum development is reached it is estimated that about 2,000,000 yearling fish may be released each year.

At the present time nine of the 30 ponds are practically complete and will

be put to use by the first of February. During the summer months a dam was constructed on Big Creek to insure an adequate water supply and a new 16-inch pipe line, 1,500 feet in length has been constructed and is ready for use.

French states that the development of new ponds and facilities at this station has been slow because of inability to obtain the necessary materials but feels certain that they will be completed in time to care for this season's crop of silverside and Chinook fingerlings.



# ELLSWORTH SERVICES UPPER COLUMBIA

## **Fish Collection Center for 116 Mile River Line**

One of the most important stations operated on the Columbia River by CRPA is located at Ellsworth, Washington, a short distance upriver from Vancouver. For many years this plant was operated as a cannery and was equipped to handle about 70 tons of fish per day on three lines. Owing to the drop in Columbia River production which followed the year 1942, the Ellsworth plant has not been operated since that date as a canning plant, but has played an important role as a receiving station for fish caught along the 116 mile stretch of the Columbia River from its junction with the Willamette near Portland to Celilo Falls.

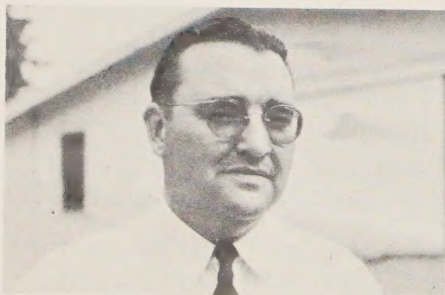
Launch tenders cover river points from the Willamette to Bonneville dam. From there upstream stations at Hood River, Packer, and Spearfish, are serviced by truck. Spearfish station located about seven miles above The Dalles, handles for the most part Indian caught fish, while the Packer station at Avery about 15 miles above The Dalles handles fish from gillnetters who operate in the vicinity.

During the year 1946 about a million and a half pounds of fish passed through the Ellsworth station district, all of which came to Astoria for final processing.

Warner Leonardo, is Superintendent at Ellsworth, and occasionally during the rush at peak season, covers his long district by plane.

A number of CRPA executives are graduates of the Ellsworth station superintendency, among them T. F. Sandoz, Executive Vice-President; William Wootton, Vice-President; and Floyd Wright, Treasurer.

### **ELLSWORTH SUPERINTENDENT**



Warner Leonardo

### **ELLSWORTH STATION AND CANNERY**



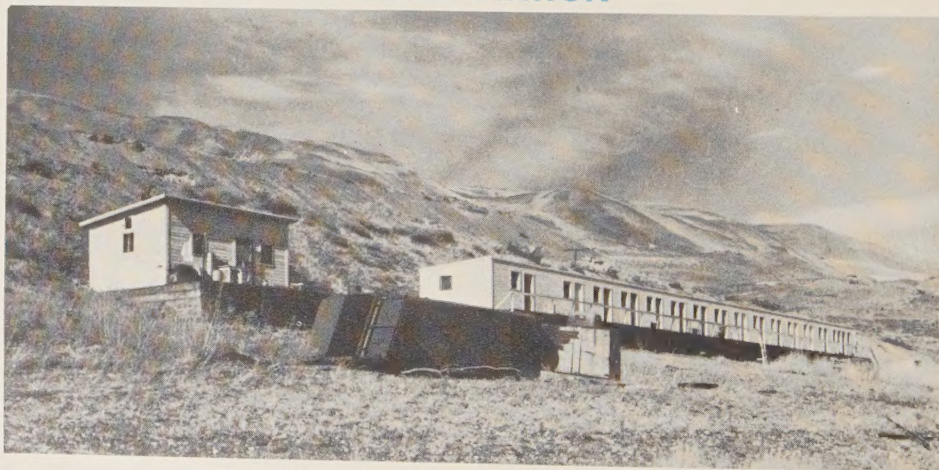
Located near Vancouver, Washington, this station plays important role in CRPA's Columbia River operation.

### **CREW MEMBERS**



Here are some of the members of the Ellsworth crew that keep salmon moving: Robert Parsons, Otto Ahlskog, Frank Lamborn, Charles Roos, Ed Norback, and Herb McNutt.

### **PACKER STATION**



Located far up the Columbia River near Celilo Falls this station services gillnet fishermen who move to this area for the season. The neat bunkhouses where these fishermen live are pictured at the right.



# TO EXPLORE NEW FISHING GROUNDS

## **SS Pacific Explorer Leaves Astoria with Big Fishing Flotilla**

When the SS Pacific Explorer left Astoria early in January for southern Pacific waters she initiated the first step in the transfer of a dream to reality. Nick Bez, well known Northwest Pacific fishing operator, had foreseen that the pressure must be relieved on the fishing banks off our coasts which have been steadily exploited for years, and that the logical way to take off this pressure was spread the scope of fishing operations to presently unexploited areas in the western Pacific and Bering Sea.

While modern fishing craft are capable of distant travel and of spending long periods at sea, the loss of fishing time in transporting their catches from distant fishing grounds, to processing plants on shore was a serious obstacle to profitable operation.

Bez conceived the idea of a factory ship, a large craft capable of storing large quantities of fishery products in frozen form, and equipped to fillet and package trawl fish, can crab meats, and reduce the waste products to oil and meal.

He organized the Pacific Exploration Co., Ltd., to handle the operation of such a ship and found our government, with the food shortage specter of the war period just receding from sight very much interested. RFC advanced funds for the conversion of the 8,800 ton steamship Marmacrey into a fish processing plant and to build four 100 foot steel trawlers, designed to supply her with fish and crabs.

### ***Fine Fishing Fleet***

The Pacific Explorer on her first trip headed for Central American waters. In addition to the four steel trawlers she will have eight other fine fishing craft which are privately owned. They include the Kiska and Swiftwater, owned by Columbia River Packers Association, The Tula, Marhild, Alletta B. and St. Francis, from Puget Sound, and the Coral Sea and Suncrest from San Diego.

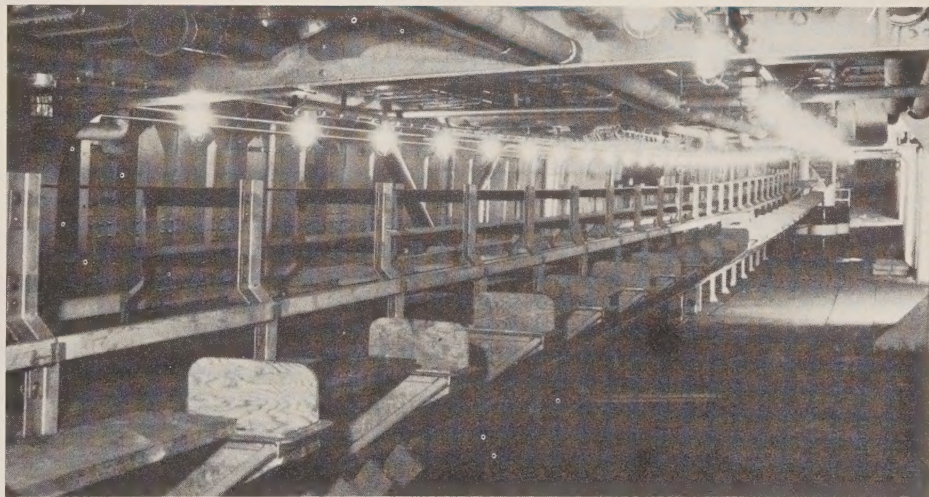
The Pacific Explorer will go directly to the fishing grounds and remain there while her attending fishing craft operate in the nearby vicinity. A plane for spotting schools of fish is attached to the expedition and will make her headquarters at shore bases near the fishing operation sites. Fish caught on the

## **SS PACIFIC EXPLORER**



Pacific Exploration Company's floating fish plant tied to CRPA dock at Astoria, Oregon, before starting her maiden voyage to southern waters. The vessel loaded 500 tons of ice and signed on her crew at this point. Tuna received by the vessel on her trip will be brought to Astoria for processing at CRPA's cannery.

## **FILLET LINE ON SS PACIFIC EXPLORER**



current trip will be sharp frozen and stored in her capacious holds and probably brought to Astoria for canning. A crew of skilled cold storage men was recruited from Astoria plants to handle this part of the job.

### ***To Bering Sea***

In the summer the Pacific Explorer will head for the Bering Sea to catch and can the big King crabs of that region.

Success of the Pacific Explorer's venture will tremendously widen the scope

of our fisheries, open up a vast new food supply for this nation, and offer a greatly extended annual employment to our fishermen and fish processing workers.

Leroy Christey, formerly with the U. S. Fish & Wild Life Service, and vice-president of the Pacific Exploration Co., Ltd., is in direct charge of the expedition, and the steamship will carry government observers who will chart the results of the new fishing processing venture.



## Crab Production Has Good Start for Early Season

Crab production started in fair quantity for the season. Early in January CRPA was receiving around 200 dozen per day from off the Columbia and from Bay Center, Washington. Price difficulties were reported to be holding down production in other ports.

Liver production was proving excellent whenever weather permitted the shark boats to spend some time at sea but occasional stormy weather was spotting the returns. Some petrale sole was being purchased from shark fishermen but there were no dragger deliveries.

Receipts of salmon for January consisted of two troll fish picked up off the Columbia. With all coastal streams closed to fishing this usual supply was lacking and there is little fresh salmon in the markets. Little improvement in salmon deliveries is expected until the brief winter season on the river opens on January 20.

The turning of the year however, saw the industry stirring again. Boat repair jobs were being put underway, gear made up, and old web-repaired.

## New Contracts

Packers have been advised that in all probability local fish workers' unions will have little to say about contracts, beginning this year. Union officials advise of a movement on foot to negotiate on the basis of area contracts with the Pacific Coast probably divided into two or at most three "areas." Negotiations on the 1947 contracts are slated to begin shortly after March 1, when contract changes desired must be presented in writing.

## Attend Convention

T. F. Sandoz, Executive Vice-President, Fred Sandoz, Sales Manager, and John McGowan, Assistant Sales Manager, were in attendance at the recent meeting of the National Cannery Convention at Atlantic City. They visited a number of eastern and middle western trade centers during their trip.

## Cover Page

Our cover page this issue pictures Nick Bez, CRPA Chairman of the Board, and the man behind the idea that led to the equipping of the Pacific Explorer to explore the fisheries resources of the Pacific ocean off the American continents, as he stands on the dock at Astoria, prior to the departure of the vessel for her maiden voyage in search of sea nurtured wealth.

## IT'S NOT FARMING



The above scene is piscatorial rather than pastoral. The horses in the picture have not been hitched to a plow and the man has no loam under his nails. The horses are heading willingly for their barn after a hard day's work catching salmon in a drag seine and their teamster wears chest high waders rather than boots. The barn they are heading for is perched high on piling and in a few hours the tide will have covered the ground they are walking on to a depth of six or eight feet.

## State Legislature Will Have Plenty of Fish for Frying

Appearance indicates that more than usual grist of fish bills will appear at the current session of the Oregon State Legislature.

Leading the flock will be a Fish Commission authority bill which, if adopted, will give the Oregon Fish Commission regulatory power over the when, where, and with what commercial fishing can be carried on. There is also promise of another "gear fight," missing since 1941 with gillnetters after other gear on the river. There are rumors of "closing above Bonneville Dam bill;" bills to amend Referendum 312 adopted by the people last November, affecting coastal streams south of the Columbia.

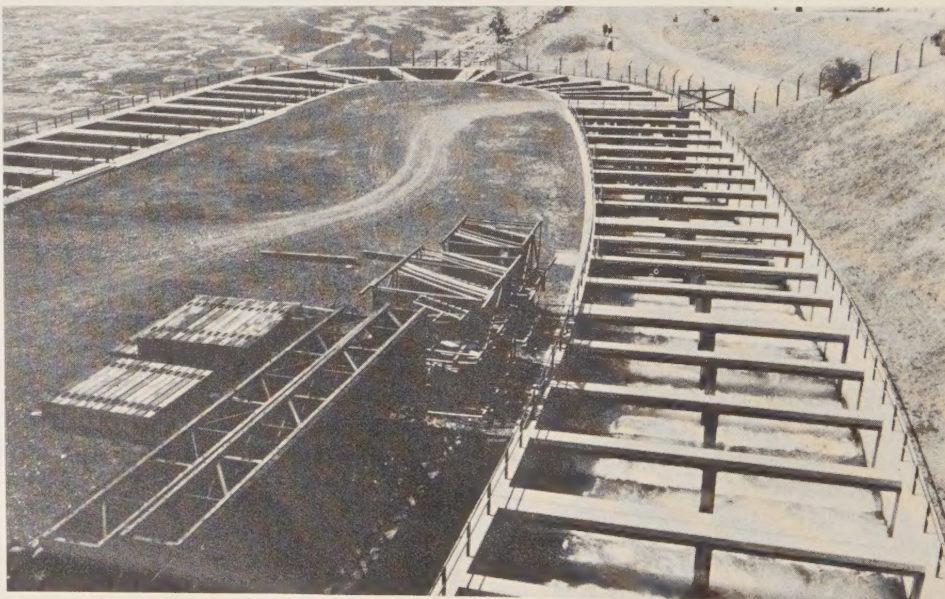
In addition there already has appeared the vanguard of a host of small bills, involving minor matters and dealing chiefly with licenses, administrative clarification, etc.

With fishing season closed generally, it doesn't look as if legislators will have much fish on their table but that they will have plenty at their desks.

## New Director

Wendell J. Coombs, San Francisco, was elected to the board of directors of the Columbia River Packers Association, Inc., to succeed Charles Schimpff, of Pasadena, at the annual meeting of the stockholders and directors here early in December.

## WHERE THE FISH CLIMB



It is like walking upstairs with a strong undertow dragging at your feet. Just part of a Bonneville Dam fish ladder. Is it any wonder some of the salmon just give up?



## Fishboat Repairs Keep Shipyard Division at Work

CRPA's shipyard division was busy the past month with an extensive boat repair program. As the year turned the yard was crowded with fishing craft all in need of major or minor repairs to be ready for the fishing season.

Two 48-foot purse seine boats constructed by the yard were launched and will be ready for delivery in a short time. Two more 48 footers went into construction. They will have certain refinements over the lines of the previous pair in accordance with recommendations by Yard Superintendent Ade Lindstrom.

A number of gillnet boats have been completed and repairs made to Alaska gillnet sail boats brought back following the 1946 expedition north.

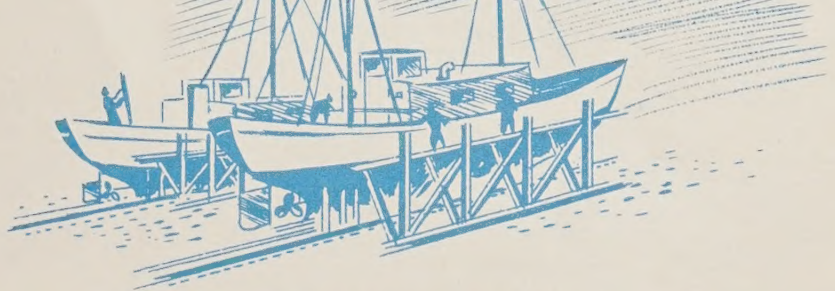
The pleasure cruiser built for Arthur J. Cox, Covina, California sportsman, has been delivered and a number of inquiries have been received by the yard from other sportsmen interested in similar craft. The Cox cruiser was built on the lines of the regular Columbia River type gillnet boat and has that craft's sturdiness and general all around seaworthiness for use in the sometimes rough water of coastal bays and estuaries.

### AT SHIPYARD

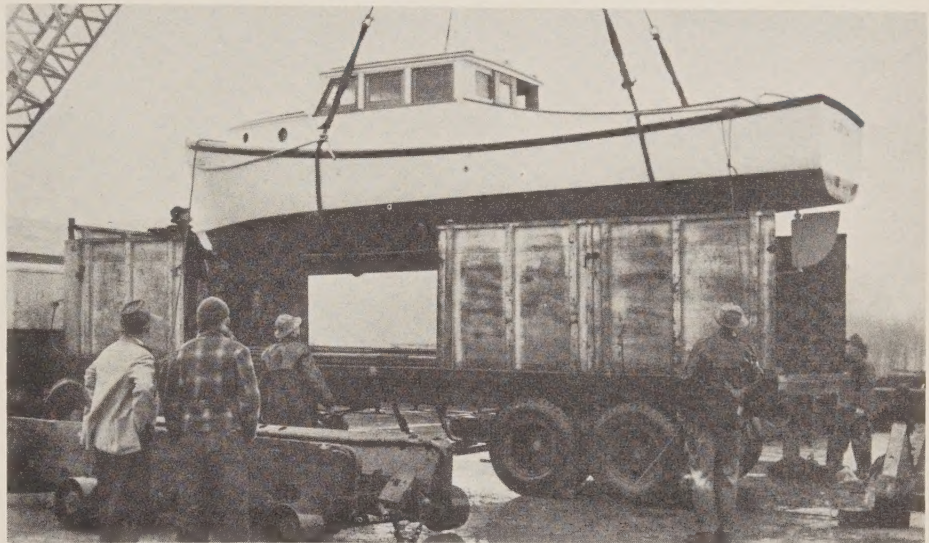


Under a tarpaulin cover workmen at CRPA Shipyard are building a new house on the big dragger Three Star. The new installation will greatly increase the ease and efficiency of the craft's operation.

## SHIPYARD DIVISION



**CRUISER "QUERIDA"**



This staunch pleasure craft built by CRPA Shipyard for Arthur J. Cox, of Covina, California, is pictured as it was being lowered on to a truck for delivery to California. The hull has the sturdy lines of the Columbia River type gillnet boat.

### PURSE SEINER LAUNCHED



Forty-eight foot purse seine boat built by CRPA Shipyard. Another similar craft is ready for delivery and initial work has begun on another pair.





# CRPA ROUND-UP



Ralph Hendrickson and Ted Nelson at their birthday blowout.



St. Helens crew; "Bo" Adams; Mrs. O. J. Gerrard; Bill Robinette; and O. J. Gerrard, Station Manager.



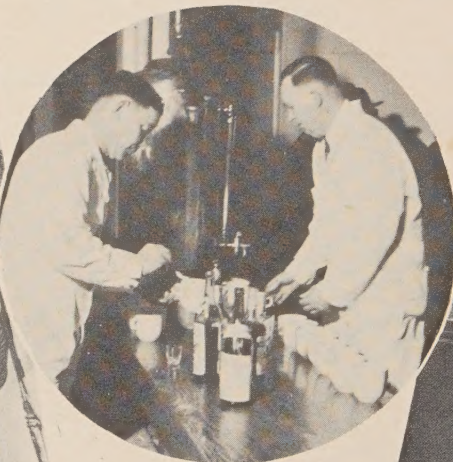
Tom 'n' Jerries at annual Elmore "grog party."



Steve Nizich and friend splicing. Maybe it's the mainbrace.



Skipper Charles Soderberg, operating deck winch on the Diehless.



Bill Laakso and Art Niemi, "cooking" at the Elmore Christmas party.



May Taylor, Asst. Paymaster.